

3.2 Shift in Paradigm

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process, several notable features of Australia's Japanese studies and education emerged. They can be described as indigenous features born of the Australian environment. These features were to have significant consequences in the cultivation of Australia's Japan literacy in the decades to come.

These distinctly 'Australian' features, developed during the growing period of the 1970s and 1980s, include:

- mixed paradigm
- strength in language education
- vocational relevancy

3.2 Shift in Paradigm

Neustupny once described the transition in the study of Japan in Australia in terms of a paradigm. In his 1980 paper titled 'On Paradigms in the Study of Japan', he analysed:

Within the present-day study of Japan I propose to distinguish three such systems (paradigm): Japanology, Japanese Studies, and what, for the lack of a better term, I wish to call the New or Contemporary Paradigm. (Neustupny 1980:21)

Low later took up the theme in 1997 in two papers: one reviewing the historical path taken by Australia's study of Japan; the other analysing the process of the development of the Japanese Studies Association of Australia (Low 1997a; Low 1997b).

No one seems to be able to pinpoint the exact point of time when the 'Japanology' paradigm was superseded by the new 'Japanese Studies' paradigm. Neustupny described the Japanology paradigm as 'developed in response to the environment where socio-cultural variation at the international level remained an irrelevant factor', and that the study in this paradigm had 'hardly any economic, political or military consequences of knowing about Japan' (Neustupny 1980:21).

If we take Neustupny's view of the Japanology paradigm, it seemed to be

certainly on the way out in Australia when the first expansion in the 1960s and 1970s occurred. As already discussed, the Japanese programs introduced in this period all seem to strive for knowledge, which would lead to the understanding of contemporary Japan. This was in contrast to the exploration into the alien and exotic civilisation of the East, which had been the interest of the scholars belonging to the previous generation.

Low points out that the time of the first expansion coincided with the retirement or near retirement of those Japan scholars, such as Ackroyd, who had been introduced to the study of Japan in pre-war or during the war period. With the departure of this generation of scholars, according to Low, there was 'a marked shift of emphasis from a humanities-based paradigm with strengths in history and literature, to one more dominated by the social sciences and a critical approach to contemporary Japan' (Low 1997b:4-5).

The first national conference of JSAA was held in 1980. The first part of the conference papers were edited by Harold Bolitho and Alan Rix and compiled into a volume titled *A Northern Prospect: Australian Papers on Japan*. In its introduction, editors comment that Australia now has very able and well-trained Japan scholars, and that each of the papers presented is the product of considerable experience both in Japan and in the respective discipline. It was the editors' observation that there remains very little of the traditional attitude of seeing Japan as 'Land of Contrast' or in terms of 'Chrysanthemum and Sword' (Bolitho & Rix 1981).

Instead, you will find an approach in which mysticism, exoticism and paranoia have been avoided, in favour of rational and dispassionate - although not unaffectionate - inquiry. (ibid.: v)

From the above argument, it seems safe to assume that the shift had occurred by the beginning of the 1980s. The mainstream in Australian study of Japan had departed from the old paradigm of Japanology and had entered the paradigm of Japanese Studies, which was more relevant to exploring the affairs of contemporary Japan.

Defining Requirements for Australia's Study of Japan: 1970s - 1980s

The traditional mode of study, however, still continued in some sections of academia. If you take the language studies, for example, the Japanese department of some universities continued to place emphasis not on the acquisition of practical language skills, but on literature study, both classical and modern, through the traditional grammar-translation method. Also continued was the study of history, religion and ethnography for the purpose of purely academic pursuit, rather than for contemporary relevancy.

In a sense, the old paradigm never totally disappeared. The tradition continued at least well into the 1990s at such centres as the University of Sydney and the Sydney-based Oriental Society of Australia, as Low stated in 1997:

The older paradigm of history, literature and culture specialists, which Ackroyd represented happily, still continues, their interests tend to be distinct and less rooted in the twentieth century. (Low 1997b:5)

With the wave of expansion in the 1960s and 1970s, however, the more contemporary paradigm of Japanese studies strongly emerged. Pursuit of knowledge relevant to contemporary Japan became the mainstream. Changing needs of the country also resulted in the study of Japan being opened up to social sciences such as economics, political science and sociology.

In fact, another prominent Australian feature is that many social scientists, rather than scholars of humanity-based disciplines, started to lead the country's Japanese academia. Social scientists, who had established prominence in Japanese studies and had become leaders in Australia's Japanese academia, include the previously mentioned names such as Arthur Stockwin (Political Science), Alan Rix (Political Science), Peter Drysdale (Economics), John Caiger (History) and David Sissons (International Relations). Neville Meaney, a leading scholar in Modern History, has to be added to the list.

About this time also, the rise of Japan, not only as Australia's largest

trading partner, but also as a prominent economic power in the world, attracted non-Japan scholars to the sphere of Japan specialisation. T.B. Millar and J.D.B. Millar, leading scholars in international relations, H. W. Arndt and John Crawford, leading economists, are notable examples (Low & Rix 1997). Victor Argy was another such prominent scholar. Argy, an internationally recognised macro-economist, served as Chief of Financial Studies Division at the IMF, and later as consultant to both the IMF and the OECD. He was at one time a visiting scholar to the Bank of Japan and to Japan's Ministry of Finance. One of his notable contributions before his untimely death in 1993 was the establishment in 1990 of the Centre for Japanese Economic Studies at Macquarie University in Sydney.

The Australia-Japan Research Centre (AJRC), established in 1980 at ANU, greatly contributed to the advancement of Japan-related social sciences, the study of regional economy and international relations in particular. The AJRC has given a larger scope to Australia's Japanese studies and helped to bring international recognition to Australia's research in the field.

Parallel with the development of the new paradigm of Japanese studies, another approach to the study of Japan was emerging. This is what was described by Neustupny as 'Contemporary Paradigm' (Neustupny 1980). Low described it as a 'critical approach to Japan' (Low 1997b). The idea was first introduced by Yoshio Sugimoto and Ross Mouer in the collection of papers titled *Alternative Models for Understanding Japanese Society*, the second collection of the proceedings of the inaugural conference of the JSAA in 1980. The argument for the new paradigm, or 'alternative model' in the approach to Japanese studies, based on variation and conflicts, was further developed by Sugimoto and Mouer in *Images of Japanese Society: A Study in the Social Construction of Reality*, 1986.

The 'Contemporary Paradigm', however, did not come to dominate over other paradigms in Australia. In fact, in Australia's study of Japan, many paradigms continued to co-exist without any single paradigm dominating the other. Low describes this feature as:

The mix of paradigms and approaches to Japan... can be called Australian-style Japanese studies. (Low 1997a:43)

This feature should not be considered as a weakness of the Australian study of Japan. On the contrary, this feature gave enormous scope to the future expansion of Japanese studies in the country. In terms of cultivating Japan literacy, mixtures of paradigms proved to be certainly beneficial. They allowed Australian scholars to approach the study of Japan from a wide spectrum of disciplines. This, in turn, allowed students of many different disciplines an opportunity to enter into Japan-related studies, and equip themselves with specialised knowledge of Japan, as well as broadly based Japan literacy.

3.3 The Language Teaching

In the cultivation of Japan skills and literacy, language skill is a vital component. Furthermore, to be functional with the language, the proficiency has to be acquired through skill-based training. In an academic discipline, particularly in humanities, however, a skill-based training is often placed in an ambiguous position. In orthodox academia, it tends to be considered merely a tool to reach 'higher' academic purposes and therefore fails to gain respectability. In Australia, the expansion in the 1960s and 1970s gave a momentum to change this traditional concept. It took, however, the whole of the 1960s and 1970s for the language teaching to gain the respectability it deserved in the mainstream of Japanese academia.

In the very beginning, Australia's Japanese education began with full emphasis on language training. The curriculum created by Murdoch, although aimed not for ordinary students but for the training of military personnel and diplomatic corps, placed emphasis on language acquisition for practical purposes.

In the years following the war, however, 'Japanology'-style academic pursuit prevailed. In this environment, the purpose of language training seemed to have been somewhat obscured. Language acquisition was considered necessary only for specific purposes, such as reading and